Anaconda's Method Masters Sand Green Problem

THOSE who have played the Anaconda (Mont.) Country club course are enthusiastic in praise of the sand greens there, the general decision being a paraphrase of the automobile slogan, "when better sand greens are made Anaconda will make them."

Considerable study and experimenting preceded the adoption of the present satisfactory methods and the practice of constructing and maintaining sand greens at this course has a whole lot of value in it for other clubs that are not pleased with their present procedure.

W. C. Capron, of the Anaconda Copper Mining company, who is green-chairman for the Anaconda Country club describes the organization's sand green construction and maintenance as follows:

"Our course started about ten years ago with nine holes and four years ago was increased to eighteen holes. We decided to make the greens 60 feet in diameter. The building of each green was exactly alike and the steps were in the order of the following level, as most clubs with which I am familiar have done. If the natural slope of the ground was so great that the wash from storms took the sand off, a certain amount of filling was done to flatten the slope.

Anaconda's Method

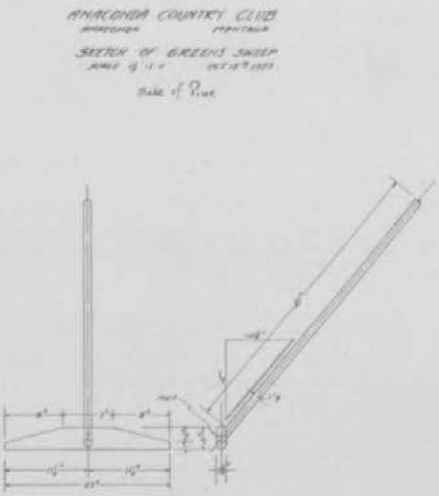
"1. The turf was stripped from the 60 ft. diameter circle.

"2. The exposed earth surface was then treated thoroughly with sulphuric acid to kill all vegetation.

"3. If the green was on ground which was slightly higher than the surrounding ground, like on a slight knoll, no filling was put in, the turf on the outside edge of the circle being merely shaved off to meet the ground of the green. If the green was on level ground or in a slight depression, the stripped area was filled to approximately one-half inch below the original ground. Practically any earth is suitable for this filling, provided it is free from rocks and pebbles, as with the constant oiling later, any ground will gradually harden.

"4. Put on evenly about one-half inch of sand which has been screened through an 8-mesh screen.

"5. The best oil we have had experience with is heavy crude oil. We seldom use this, however, due to the cost. We place steel drums at all the filling stations in town. The operators at these filling stations save all the oil drained from automobiles and trucks and put it into these drums. About 90 per cent of our oil is obtained this way. It takes more of this kind of oil than it would of heavy crude, but as this waste oil is given to us, its use saves a lot of money. In oiling a green we set a drum of oil close to the green, connect to this drum a hose long enough to reach any part of the green with a wide flat sprinkler on the end. A small hand pump is also connected to the steel drum. One man operates the pump and another man does the sprinkling. It takes



This light sweep was satisfactory at Anaconda

nearly a barrel to the green for the first sprinkling, the oil being distributed over the green as evenly as possible.

"6. The oil and sand are mixed as thoroughly as possible by light raking, being careful not to drag up earth below sand.

"7. Thoroughly roll.

"8. Sweep thoroughly with a large carpet sweep.

"Green is now ready for play.

"The upkeep of our sand greens is extremely simple and consists of merely putting on sand or oil as required. We find here that a treatment about every two weeks during the hot weather keeps the greens in good condition. If wind or rain has taken sand off the greens, new sand of the necessary amount is evenly put on, oil being then sprinkled on as above. For upkeep, a quarter to a half barrel of oil per green per application, is sufficient.

Sand and Slag Used

"At Anaconda we have been experimenting for some time with materials for sand greens and now put on a combination of sand and slag. The slag would not be available at many places. This slag is the waste product from the smelting furnaces of the Anaconda Copper Mining company, and as it leaves the furnaces in a molten stream, is dropped into jets of high pressure water, which granulates it. It is then sluiced to a dump. It contains 18% to 20% iron and is, therefore, much heavier than sand.

"We must use 70% sand and 30% slag which has been screened through the same screen as the sand. This makes a fine green and stays in place better than straight sand.

"We have been constantly experimenting with different types of sweeps and have finally adopted a sweep, a sketch of which accompanies this description of our methods. We feel this is far superior to any we have tried. It sweeps well and is light and can be handled easily by women and children, and can be left standing in the cup, whereas a heavy sweep, if left standing in the cup, destroys the cup or its setting.

"I might add that our greens have been the best this summer since the course was built.

"We have had the state tournament at Anaconda twice since installing 18 holes. The card for our course was originally copied from the card used by the Old Elm club at Chicago."